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Past - Present - Future



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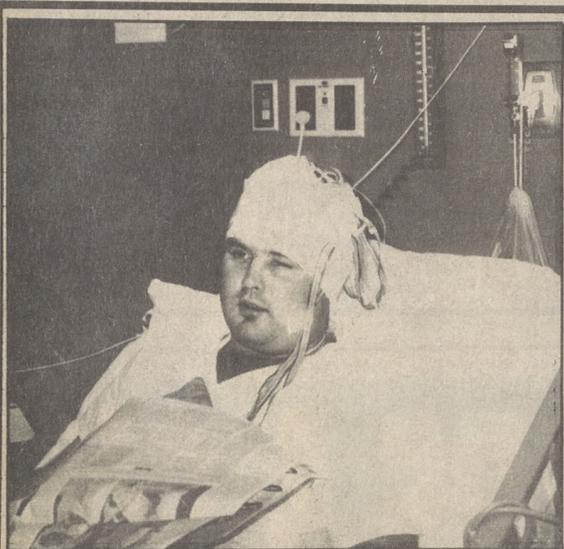
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CHRIS MORRIS
Surgery gives him new start

New surgery gives Morrises new hope

By RENEE WALSER
Of The Herald Staff

The Morris family of Kings Mountain wants to spread their hope to others who might be in their situation.

Son, Chris, was diagnosed with complex partial seizures, a form of epilepsy, when he was a junior in high school and 17 years old. Now, four years later, his seizures have become less frequent thanks to a relatively new surgical procedure for epileptics.

Chris' mother, April, wanted to stress that the procedure was not for everyone who has this problem. But, she said, "It is a ray of hope for a lot of people."

Chris was an outstanding baseball player when his teammates noticed that he would "space out" during ball practice. His seizures took the form of leaning to the left side while his arms and hands drew in to his chest and he would start walking, all the while not knowing what he was doing. April said these periods were especially scary because he could walk in front of a car, for instance.

"We have never been able to determine why they started," April said.

At first, the seizures were infrequent and didn't stunt Chris' normal life. He won the 1989 Coaches Award in football and played on the state championship baseball team. After he graduated, he went on to Western Carolina University.

Then Chris' seizures became more frequent and started lasting longer. Medicines didn't seem to help. He was having one to four seizures a day and could never be left alone.

Looking back and laughing about it a little, Chris told of the time he took a test in college and must have had a seizure during the test, because when he got the exam back, about three pages of the test had not been answered.

During this time, Chris tried different medications.

"Some made him like a zombie," said April. He made a 1.9 at school

one semester on one medicine and then on another medication, he made a 2.9 the next semester.

"He asked the doctor if he could give him something that would get him a 4.0," April said.

Chris was found to be a candidate for surgery because he could not find a medicine or combination of medicines to help. During Christmas break of his sophomore year at Western Carolina, Chris entered Carolina Medical Center for testing. External electrodes were attached to his head and he was monitored by a video camera around the clock for ten days. The doctors were trying to determine in which part of the brain the seizures were originating.

The tests were inconclusive and further testing was needed. This time the electrodes were inserted in the brain for ten days. The seizures were found to be coming from the left temporal lobe of the brain, but this is the area where speech is located.

Chris had to be tested some more to "map" out the speech and memory areas of the brain so they could be avoided during surgery.

At one point, the surgery was put on hold because the doctors thought it would interfere with his speech. But on Nov. 8, Dr. Jerry Greenhoot surgically removed the anterior portion of Chris' left temporal lobe and with the right medicine, is recovering "beautifully," according to his mother.

Chris has "tip of the tongue" phenomena, April said. His speech is slow but doctors say in a year, he should be back to normal.

"What I've got to do right now is wait at least a year," Chris said about his future.

Now he is recuperating at home and helping his dad at his store.

"I'm a nurse, and I had no idea until we went through this what advances have been made," said April.

While April was amazed, Chris seemed to take losing a part of his brain all in stride.

"Like they say, you only use a portion of your brain anyway," he said.

Controversial hearing Tuesday

Three public hearings, two of which are expected to be controversial, are on the agenda for Tuesday night's city council meeting.

Neighbors of a proposed 60-bed addition to Kings Mountain Convalescent Center are expected to object to rezoning of adjacent property by White Oak Manor. Neighbors of city property on Bridges Drive targeted for a park are expected to appear in opposition.

In addition, Mayor Scott Neisler is expected to present a proposal from Radio Station WKMT for airing of city council meetings, a proposal which met objection from Commissioner Fred Finger when the subject was brought up at a recent utilities' meeting and which the mayor favors.

A third public hearing is a request from heirs of Elizabeth Rhea to rezone property at 1404 Shelby Rd. from NB to GB for a farm center.

Other items on a 26-item agenda include consideration of a resolution adopting an internal accounting manual, amending a personnel ordinance regarding retirees' medical insurance, amending the municipal code regarding junk and abandoned vehicles, approving sewer service to Hillcrest Mobile Home Park in Oak Grove community and consideration of several change orders in utility projects.

Neighbors of Kings Mountain Convalescent Center say if the city approves rezoning for an addition to the Sipe Street nursing home that it

will mean increased traffic in an area in the western section of the city they call a traffic hazard. Twelve residents of the area attended the recent meeting of the Planning & Zoning Board when Kemp Cecil, president of White Oak Manor, Otto Cecil, vice president, both of Spartanburg, S. C. and Karen Radford, local administrator, made the request, which the board unanimously denied.

City council has the final say on rezoning requests.

Some residents of the Bridges Drive area say they fear a lighted park could create a hangout.

See Council, 12-A

12-month school possible at West

By RENEE WALSER
Of The Herald Staff

Kings Mountain School System is getting closer to making a decision on turning West Elementary School into a year-round school for next year.

The school board will probably decide in April whether to keep West a traditional calendar school or make it a year-round calendar program or both -- a school-within-a-school -- with parents having a choice of calendars, said Superintendent Bob McRae and Assistant Superintendent Jane King.

If West went to a school-within-a-school format, McRae stressed that it would be up to the parents whether their children attended classes the traditional nine months with summers off or if they would attend what is called a 45/15 schedule -- 45 days of school and 15 days of intersession or vacation days.

McRae said there are four pilot year-round schools in North Carolina and three of them are school-within-a-school facilities.

Using the 45/15 schedule, students would go to classes for nine weeks and then have three weeks of vacation. During those three

weeks, a student needing remedial study would attend one week of classes. There would also be a week of enrichment for high achievers. And day care would be available for all three weeks. Enrichment and day care are optional and there would be a charge for those programs. Remedial study would be free.

McRae said there was really no change in that policy because at the present the system charges for day care and enrichment programs.

The reason for converting to year-round schools is to upgrade student achievement, McRae and King said. There are other benefits,

as King and West Principal Sherrill Toney learned at the National Year-round Conference in California this month. One is to benefit some working parents: The school schedule may parallel their schedule better. Also there seems to be less burn-out for students and teachers.

But King said the primary benefit is continuous learning. The students need less time to spend reviewing what has been learned, they retain more and achievement goes up.

McRae said they had studied

See School, 3-A

Scism, Hoyle join Senate races

A race has developed for both the new State Senate District 37 and 25th District seats with the announcement of their candidacies by Patterson Grove resident Bruce T. Scism for District 37 and founder/former president of Summey Building Systems and former Dallas mayor David W. Hoyle of Shelby for District 25.

Former Senator J. Ollie Harris of Kings Mountain is running in the newly-created District 37 and former House Speaker Carl Stewart is running for the 25th District seat which Harris held for 18 years until two years ago when he was defeated.



SCISM

feated for reelection. Scism has run unsuccessfully for the 25th District seat several times. All are Democrats.



HOYLE

Incumbent Republican 25th District Senator Jim Forrester of Stanley has not announced. There is no incumbent in the 37th District, which includes most of Cleveland and all of Rutherford counties.

Scism, Kings Mountain native, says his experience in business makes him qualified to help turn government around. "I want to get the government out of our pocket-books and the legislature to stop passing so many laws that interfere with our freedom as a people," he said.

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Kings Mountain People



HELEN HATCH

KM's Helen Hatch talented musician

By ELIZABETH STEWART
Of The Herald Staff

Joining the all-male Kings Mountain Kiwanis Club was natural for Helen Hatch, who chose the civic club her husband has been active in for 15 years because she knew of service the organization does in the community.

Helen and George Hatch found they liked the same things about four years ago when both got interested in the Gastonia Toastmasters Club. George, then an officer in the club, welcomed Helen Burnham Ross to her first meeting. In June the couple will celebrate their third wedding anniversary.

Moving to Kings Mountain, Helen joined First Presbyterian Church with her husband and recently signed up for piano lessons,

something that Helen had almost forgot about since she was a little girl.

Reared in a musical family in Bloomington, Indiana, Helen started playing bassoon, a wood wind instrument when she was 12 years old. She performed with the Bloomington Civic and Youth Orchestras, setting a pattern of musical achievement that led her to North Carolina. She toured with the N. C. Symphony one summer as a student, and later joined the Charlotte Symphony Orchestra on a permanent basis, playing bassoon in the 60-member orchestra.

"I was in college and noticed on the bulletin board that the Charlotte Symphony was looking for a bassoon player, so I flew to Charlotte and auditioned," said the petite

See Hatch, 3-A

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